Butterfly rape

During a visit to Corregidor Island, just off Manila in the Philippines, I had the opportunity of observing the mating behaviour of *Cethosia biblis insularis* C. & R. Felder, 1861. Most butterflies go through some sort of mating ritual, sometimes most intricate. *Cethosia biblis* does not. The male grabs the female in the air, forces her to the ground, sits on top of her, and gradually aligns himself to curl the abdomen so *copula* is established. It is just ten seconds between the intercept in the air and *copula*. It looks like rape of the most brutal nature. This is also the common procedure among the *Acraea*, which is interesting. Though the *Cethosia* have traditionally been considered members of the Nymphalinae, recent findings indicate that they may be closely related to the Acraeinae. So maybe we have to include rape in future cladistic and systematic studies. Males and females must live in different habitats and the females only come into male territory only when they "want" to get raped; when going about the important business of laying eggs they cannot afford to be waylaid by males intent on rape. So here is a nice little research project for someone going to Corregidor for more than a weekend of quality time with their wife.– Torben B. Larsen, 5 Wilson Compound, 2811 Park Avenue, 1300 Pasay City, Metro Manila, The Philippines (E-mail: torbenlarsen@compuserve.com).

***Odontomyia tigrina* (Fabr.) (Dip.: Stratiomyidae) in urban London**

Folkestone Gardens, a small 2.4-hectare public open space in Deptford, south-east London (grid reference TQ361770), is dominated by an artificial pond. Edged with willow trees and covered with lily pads, at first sight it looks promising, but a closer inspection shows, unfortunately, that tyres, plastic bags and empty beer cans lurk in the shallows. Thinking that there was fairly little hope for invertebrates in another of London's vandalised ponds, I was pleasantly surprised to sweep a specimen of *Odontomyia tigrina* off of emergent vegetation on 8 June 1999.

This rather local fly is nationally scarce, accorded Notable status by Falk (1991, *A review of the scarce and threatened flies of Great Britain. Part 1)* who reports that it is primarily found near ponds and ditches in southern England, especially on the coastal marshes of Monmouthshire, Somerset and the Thames Estuary.

Although close to the River Thames, less than a kilometre as the insect flies, Folkstone Gardens is about as far removed from the fly's normal habitat as can be imagined. The small site is completely surrounded by railway lines, dense urban housing and busy roads. Ironically, the "gardens" of its title refer to an oddly-named series of apparently gardenless streets of small blocks of flats, built at the end of the 19th century. They were demolished by a V2 rocket in 1945 and the site was derelict, then home to various industrial units, until it was cleared in the late 1960s or early 1970s and the pond created. The pond leaked and dried out in the early 1990s, but was restored in 1994 when a new butyl liner was put in place.

The present aquatic fauna of the pond is very poor. There are plenty of water hoglice *Asellus* species in the eutrophic, leaf-polluted mud, four common water

beetles *Hyphydrus ovatus* (L.), *Haliplus confinis* Stephens, *Helochares lividus* (Forster) and *Noterus clavicornis* (Degeer), one water boatman *Cymatia coleoptrata* (Fabr.), the water walker *Hydrometra stagnorum* (L.), the saucer bug *Ilycoris cimicoides* (L.) and two common damselflies *Enallagma cyanthigerum* (Charpentier) and *Ischnura elegans* (Vander Linden).

Only two soldier flies, the single *Odontomyia tigrina* and several specimens of the pretty black and yellow species *Oxycera rara* (Scopoli) elevated the site from the wholly mundane and offered the promise of some slight invertebrate potential for the pond.– RICHARD A. JONES, 135 Friern Road, East Dulwich, London SE22 0AZ. (bugmanjones@hotmail.com).

Prionocyphon serricornis (Müller) (Col.: Scirtidae) in Wiltshire and Suffolk

Prionocyphon serricornis was originally assigned Red Data Book category 3 (Rare) status by Shirt (1987, *British Red Data Books: 2. Insects*. NCC), but was subsequently downgraded to Notable B by Hyman & Parsons (1992, *A review of the scarce and threatened Coleoptera of Great Britain. Part 1*. UK Nature Conservation No. 3. JNCC). Larvae occur in wet or water-filled rot-holes in trees; they are also frequently encountered in the root-plate pools of beech *Fagus* sylvatica. Larvae appear to be more often recorded than adults.

As I am unaware of any published records for Wiltshire and Suffolk the following captures would seem noteworthy.

Wiltshire: Bemerhills, Grovely Wood, Great Wishford, grid reference SU 0634, 2 beaten from mature oak *Quercus*, 11.viii.1971; Bagfield Copse, Hamptworth, SU 22, 1 beaten from oak *Quercus*, 7. viii. 1986.

Suffolk: Shrubland Park Estate, Coddenham, TM 1253, 1 swept near beeches *Fagus sylvatica*, 20.ix.1986.

I thank Mr. N. Anderson (Hamptworth Estate), The Earl of Pembroke (Grovely Wood) and Lord de Saumarez (Shrubland Park) for permission to record on their property.– DAVID R. NASH, 3 Church Lane, Brantham, Suffolk CO11 1PU.

Fourth update of early emergences of moths at Selborne

The table overleaf continues the comparison (*Ent. Rec.* **111**: 286-287) between my earliest observations of non-hibernatory species in 1992-94 with those in 1995-1997. The m.v. light was run here on just over 320 nights during each year of the survey. Of these next 42 species, 29 arrived earlier in 1995-97 than in 1992-94. Three species shared the same earliest date in both periods. Fifteen species were up to a month earlier than is usually expected.